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AUTHOR Wallhausen, Helen A.
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ABSTRACT

A study examined the effect on students' perceptions of the reading process of the first professional sequence of classes in foundations of teaching reading and language arts. A variety of quantitative and qualitative data were gathered concerning the subjects (22 sophomore undergraduate elementary teacher education majors) including: students' personal journal entries; direct interviews with the subjects; an individual reading case study completed by each subject; direct observation of each student during class instruction; and interviews with the cooperating classroom teacher at the field site. Results indicated that: (1) students master the basic content of reading theory and methodology more rapidly than they change their beliefs about reading theory and instructional methodology; (2) students' ability to change their beliefs about perceptions of the reading process and to accommodate new models is tied to their level of cognitive development and their motivation to mediate change; (3) students who are motivated to change their beliefs are more apt to mediate change when they have the opportunity to observe more than one active model of instruction; and (4) students not adequately prepared to implement an unfamiliar reading strategy in a teaching situation will resist implementing new strategies and fall back on old models. (Seven tables of data are included; two questionnaires and a syllabus are attached.) (RS)

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THE EFFECT OF FIRST TEACHER EDUCATION COURSES ON STUDENTS' PERCEPTION OF THE READING PROCESS

By
Helen A. Wallhausen
April 1990

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THE EFFECT OF FIRST TEACHER EDUCATION COURSES ON STUDENTS' PERCEPTION OF THE READING PROCESS

By Helen Wallhausen

Explaining current traditions in reading research in the Handbook of Reading Research (1984), Michael Kamil identifies two major thrusts:

- understanding the basic nature of the reading process, and
- a search for better methods of teaching, with a goal of improving education and reducing illiteracy.

How can undergraduates in teacher education programs be prepared to encounter the split . . . between basic and applied research in reading and the language arts . . . between theory and practice in the reading/language arts classroom?

Superiority of instructional methodology in reading and the language arts has always been a highly charged and politicized subject. The current either/or battle of the early nineties is between "whole language" proponents and those in favor of more traditional methods exemplified in phonics/basal readers. How can undergraduates be apprised of the advantages and disadvantages of both ends of the instructional continuum without polarizing their allegiances so they will be prepared to function knowledgeably as teachers and adapt their teaching styles in a school district with either focus?

The instructional assumptions of theoretical/philosophical process learning methodologies dictate appropriate assessment formats. Reality dictates standardized reading achievements tests will be part of evaluation for planning purposes at minimum. How can students in a teacher education program be prepared to accommodate both qualitative and quantitative reading assessment successfully into an instructional program in the current "accountability driven" educational climate?

In order to prepare for a years experience as an instructor in the initial experience reading/language arts/learning theory block of classes in a professional teacher education

sequence at a Midwestern state university, the researcher undertook a semester's study of the reading literature and the professional teacher education literature, and completed a survey of professional reading teachers in the service area of the university and a case study of a first year graduate from the university's teacher education program. This paper represents a summary report of a pilot study undertaken during the fall semester of 1989 and the spring semester of 1990 with twenty-two undergraduate students enrolled in their first professional sequence of foundations of teaching reading and language arts. The purpose of the study was to explore how students cope with the split between theory and practice in reading, to document their models of the reading process, and to observe how they accommodate new models of the reading process.

Introduction

> You make a great, a very great mistake, if you think that psychology, being the science of mind's laws, is something from which you can deduce definite programmes and schemes and methods of instruction for immediate schoolroom use. Psychology is a science, and teaching is an art, and sciences never generate arts directly out of themselves. (William James, 1901 pp. 7f)

Ninety years after James' pronouncement, the gap between theory and practice, basic and applied research, in reading has widened, according to Kamil. The evidence from fields other than reading indicates that "the returns from 'basic' research may be greater than those from 'applied' efforts" (Kamil quoting Kerlinger 1977, p. 44). Yet, according to Richard Venezky, "basic research on reading . . . has influenced reading practice the least." (p. 3) "The study of reading instruction is still in search of an adequate methodology." (Venezky p. 26). The research gap exists. "In the communication of research results to other researchers and teaching specialists, conditions today appear to be much less favorable than those of 80 years ago." (Venezky p. 28).

Teacher education literature is equally dismal. According to Lortie (1975), teachers are the only professionals who serve an "apprenticeship of observation." By the time prospective teachers enter a professional teacher education program, they have been teacher observers for at least thirteen years. They have decided pre-conceptions concerning the task of teaching reading. The idealized reading theory/methodology classes in professional teacher education programs set up a tension between the "apprenticeship of observation" and the student teaching apprenticeship which negates the professional instruction. (Tabachnick and Zeichner, 1981). The split between theory and practice is reinforced (Bartholomew, 1976). Students rationalize an idealized world (model) and a real world (model). The first-year reading teacher prefers to ask a peer or "the teacher next door" for professional advice when teaching problems arise, rather than a teacher educator, researcher, or reading consultant. Due to the isolation of the self-contained classroom, many neophyte teachers never observe appropriate reading instructional practice modeled by a master reading teacher. Without opportunities to accommodate new models, professional teachers fall back on old models learned by observation as students (Lortie, 1975).

Is the gap between basic and applied research in reading inherent as suggested by William James in 1901? Shall we abandon teacher education programs as a waster of time, as suggested by the Holmes Group, because the gap between theory and practice in reading is incompatible? Or can process and product goals coexist?

Seymour Papert provides a powerful image of "wheels turning in my head" in the foreword to his book, Mindstorms (1980).

> The understanding of learning must be genetic. It must refer to the genesis of knowledge. What an individual can learn, and how he learns it, depends on what models he has available. This raises, recursively, the question of how he learned these models. Thus the laws of learning must be about how intellectual structures grow out of one another and about how, in the process, they acquire both logical and emotional form . . . It develops a

> new perspective for education research focused on creating the conditions under which intellectual models will take root. (Papert, 1980, p. vii)

Papert's ideas of cognition's taking root within a social and cultural context form a metaphor for learning about reading instruction within the context of a professional teacher education program. The content of the program becomes the basic research on reading processes and the applied research on methodology/instruction in reading. The model/models are the teacher educator(s) translating basic/applied research and thereby superseding the apprenticeship of observation by substituting a more powerful model for prospective teachers to emulate within a social and cultural context which encourages its growth.

Aim

The aim of this study is to examine the effect of the first professional sequence of classes in foundations of teaching reading, and language arts on twenty-two sophomore level undergraduate elementary teacher education majors' perceptions of the reading process by:

- documenting how students perceive the reading process before and after the first sequence of professional education classes;
- identifying the models of the reading process that are available to students before and after the first sequence of professional education classes; and
- comparing the ways in which students accommodate and mediate new models of the reading process.

Methodology

Data Collection

The method employed by the researcher utilized both quantitative and qualitative data collection techniques. These techniques included:

- Two informal questionnaires with nine structured questions administered the first day of classes and during the last week of classes in the semester. (See Appendix A)
- Two individual personal journal entries each week submitted by each student reflecting on their two individual tutoring sessions and two classroom teaching sessions in the field. These were maintained as a notebook by each student and submitted at the end of the semester for growth grading.
- Direct interview (approximately twenty minute sessions) with each student four times during the semester.
- Five teacher-made tests covering the reading/language arts theory and instructional methodology content which also included open-ended questions concerning the students' definition of reading and preference of instructional methodology.
- Informal student reports to the class concerning problems and progress in individual tutoring in reading, followed by small- and large-group discussion.
- An individual reading case study completed by each student during field assignment which included a weekly field site report documenting progress. (See Appendix A)
- Four formal reports on each student based on the Performance Based Teacher Evaluation in checklist format completed by the cooperating classroom teacher in the field site.
- One formal report on each student based on the Performance Based Teacher Evaluation in checklist format completed jointly by the cooperating classroom teacher in the field site and the researcher at the end of the semester.
- Direct observation by the researcher of each student during whole class teaching and individual tutoring at the field site each week during the semester.
- Direct interview with the cooperating classroom teacher at the field site each week during the semester.

Data Analysis

The data were transcribed to data summary sheets, sorted and compared. Growth across the semester is documented as change in definitions reported by the students in non-graded informal writing.

- Data documenting how students perceive the reading process before and after the first sequence of professional education classes were confirmed by personal interview with the students and compared to the data compiled by Egan, Carol, Laurie, and Rita: Three Persons in the Act of Becoming Teachers, which employs the Teacher Belief Inventory and data compiled by the researcher through interviews with twelve experienced professional reading teachers in the Southeast Missouri State University service area. (Wallhausen, "Short Term and Long Term Implications of Minimum Competency Testing on Reading Curriculum, Instructional Practices and Attitudes of Elementary Reading Teachers in the Missouri Bootheel", July 1988).

- Data identifying the models of the reading process that are available to students before and after the first sequence of professional education classes were confirmed by personal interview with the students and compared to the data compiled by Feiman-Memser and Buchmann, The First Year of Teacher Preparation: Transition to Pedagogical Thinking, and data compiled by the researcher through interviews with eleven classroom reading teachers, (Wallhausen, "One School: A Microcosm — A Report on Educators' Perceptions of the Definition, Role and Use of Literature in the Curriculum in Missouri", March 1989) and through in-depth interviews in a case study with a first year graduate of Southeast Missouri State University's teacher education program (Wallhausen, "Becoming a Teacher: Stranger in a Familiar Land", May 1989).

- Data comparing the ways in which students accommodate and mediate new models of the reading process were organized into five categories and compared to the developmental classification system outlined by Belenky, Clinchy, Goldberger and Tarule

in Women's Ways of Knowing (1986), based on William Perry's scheme, Forms of Intellectual and Ethical Development in the College Years (1970).

Site

Southeast Missouri State University is one of four public regional universities in Missouri which were originally chartered as normal schools. Situated on the Mississippi River in the city of Cape Girardeau, the university's service area extends from St. Louis to the Arkansas border and includes 24 counties.

The teacher education program utilizes area public schools in Missouri and across the river in southern Illinois within a one- to one-and-a-half-hour driving radius of the campus as field experience sites. It accommodates both NCATE and state Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (DESE) guidelines for accreditation.

The undergraduate teacher education sequence was revised in 1987 into a modular sequence which includes a planned field site experience in teaching each year beginning in the freshman year. Field experiences must include a balance of urban, rural and suburban sites as well as ethnic and socio-economic diversity.

Participants

The participants in the study included twenty-two sophomore level students enrolled in the Block II undergraduate elementary teacher education sequence at Southeast Missouri State University in the fall 1989 and spring 1990 semesters.

The fall 1989 semester section of seven students included five non-traditional age students, of whom two had earned baccalaureate degrees in other fields. The section was small due to the fact that it was the initial section offered at a newly opened adjunct facility sixty-five miles south of the main campus. All seven students were placed in the same elementary building for their field experience.

The spring 1990 semester section totaled fifteen students, including five non-traditional students. Classes were held on the main campus but the students were placed in three different sites for their field experience.

Program

The sophomore level teacher education sequence consists of a seven credit hour block of professional classes taught by one instructor, who also supervises the six-hour field site experience. Classes taught Monday, Wednesday and Friday include two hours of an initial experience in learning theory, three hours of foundations of teaching reading, and two hours of foundations of teaching language arts. Tuesday and Thursday mornings are reserved for field experience. While the classes are listed separately in the schedule of courses, instruction is tightly interwoven.

In addition, students must demonstrate mastery of the sound/symbol relationships of the language, proficiency in a handwriting system, and knowledge of instructional techniques of grammar. (See Appendix B)

Course Content

The initial reading/language arts course sequence stresses mastery of basic reading research theory from a historical perspective and instructional methodology trends from the perspective of advantages and disadvantages. Students are required to become familiar enough with the content load across the semester to be able to apply the content in problem solving/teaching situations and defend their choices. They must also be able to recognize a technique or methodology when a classroom teacher employs it and give logical reasons for its use.

Elementary majors are required to take a total of ten hours of reading/language arts methods courses within teacher education. The basic assumptions underlying all classes are:

- Reading/language arts instruction must focus on meaning/communication.

- The objective of all reading instruction is comprehension of connected text.
- Historically, reading has been taught part-to-whole and whole-to-part
- All reading instructional methodologies have advantages and disadvantages inherent in them and must be supplemented by the teacher.
- No instructional method is successful with all children.
- Methodology must be matched to the learners' strengths.
- Children must be placed in instruction material with which they can succeed.
- Teachers teach reading.
- All teachers are teachers of reading.
- Good reading teachers are prepared, knowledgeable, flexible, and efficient.
- In any classroom, a teacher can expect 50% of students to be reading on or above grade level and 50% of students to be reading on or below grade level.

Field Experience

Block II is designated as a rural or suburban placement. Students are placed in elementary classrooms with an experienced classroom teacher on Tuesday and Thursday mornings from eight o'clock until eleven o'clock during the time reading and language arts are taught by the classroom teacher. They are encouraged to participate as student teachers as much as they are able to participate and to make themselves indispensable to the teacher and students.

Each student is required to complete an individual case study in reading on an elementary pupil within a semester-long individual tutoring program. There is a minimum requirement of three planned whole group lessons — literature, language arts, and reading, and administration of a group spelling test.

Fifty percent of the students plan and teach more than the required three whole group lessons. All students also participate in formal and informal small group instruction. One hundred percent of the students teach a small group reading lesson, a whole group

language arts lesson, and administer a spelling test employing grade level basal texts. In tutoring sessions in reading, all students use trade books and content materials (in conjunction with student developed skill materials based on these) focused at the pupil's independent reading level.

Instructional Techniques

Instructional techniques which were employed by the researcher with both the fall and spring students included:

- lecture with visuals by the researcher;
- large group discussion;
- small group discussion led by students;
- demonstration by the researcher;
- model lesson simulation by the researcher;
- participation in micro-teaching units by students;
- presentations by public school personnel and other college students;
- field reports by students;
- group work sessions with instructional materials;
- peer debriefing sessions;
- one-on-one direct instruction of students by the researcher.

Fall students were also instructed by the researcher's direct modeling of reading/language arts instructional techniques with elementary school children in large group and individual tutoring settings. This was possible because all students were placed in a single field site and the researcher could be at the site each day the students were in the field.

Spring students were instructed by passive modeling of reading/language arts instructional techniques by the researcher and by former students of the researcher on video

tape and through lesson simulation. Due to the placement of spring students in three separate field sites fifty miles apart, active modeling with children was not feasible.

It is, therefore, possible to compare the two groups of students on accommodating new models of the reading process. Data are self-reported by the students.

Findings

The results of the data collected over the two semester period fall 1989 and spring 1990 are grouped under the three headings which defined the study — students' perception of the reading process before and after the first sequence of professional education classes; models of the reading process available to students before and after the first sequence of professional education classes; and ways in which students accommodate and mediate new models of the reading process. Growth across the semester was documented by change in the students' written definitions pertaining to the reading process. The data reveal:

Perception of the Reading Process

Students' perception of the reading process before and after the first sequence of professional reading classes was documented through the questions:

- Define reading.
- What is reading?
- Why read? Why do you read?
- Why do we teach reading?

CHART 1: CHANGES IN PERCEPTION OF THE READING PROCESS
Total number of students is twenty-two (n=22).

• Define reading 22 students changed their definition of reading	100%.
• What is reading? 22 students changed their responses	100%
• Why read? Why do you read? 18 students changed their responses	82%
• Why do we teach reading? 18 students changed their responses	82%

Models of the Reading Process

Models of the reading process available to the students before and after the first sequence of professional education classes were documented through the questions?

- How did you learn to read? (By what method?)
- Historically, what have been the most popular methods for teaching reading?
- What is the most effective method for teaching reading?
- Define children's literature. What is it?

CHART 2: MODELS OF THE READING PROCESS
Total number of students is twenty-two (n=22).

- How did you learn to read? (By what method?)
  21 students changed responses 96%
  1 student responded "no memory"

- Historically, what have been the most popular methods for teaching reading?
  22 students changed responses 100%

- What is the most effective method for teaching reading?
  20 students changed responses 91%
  2 students made no change in response

- Define children's literature. What is it?
  20 students changed responses 91%
  2 students made no change in response

Accommodating New Models

The ways in which students accommodate and mediate new models of the reading process was evaluated by documenting student responses to three questions:

- 1. How did you learn to read?

- 2. Who do you believe is the most effective reading teacher you know or have known and what makes him or her such a good model?
- 3. If you have changed your mind about teaching reading this semester, what has caused the change?

Responses to questions one and two were compared for a change of models. Question three was asked only at the end of the semester and responses were compared to question eight ("What is the most effective method for teaching reading?)

Report of change in response across semester for all students:

CHART 3: CHANGE OF IDEAL MODEL READING TEACHER
(BASED ON COMPARISON OF QUESTIONS 1 AND 2)

	Fall/Spring 1989-1990 n=22		Fall 1989 n=7		Spring 1990 n=15	
Change of model	7	32%	3	43%	4	27%
No change of model	13	59%	3	43%	10	67%
Still in search of an appropriate model	2	9%	1	14%	1	6%

CHART 4: CHANGE OF BELIEF
IN AN IDEAL INSTRUCTIONAL MODEL OF READING

	Fall/Spring 1989-1990 n=22		Fall 1989 n=7		Spring 1990 n=15	
Change of model	17	77%	5	72%	12	80%
No change of model	5	23%	2	28%	3	20%

Growth Across the Semester

Growth across the semester was documented by analyzing the students' definitions and responses on the nine questions and comparing each student's beginning of semester and ending of semester responses for change. Students' definitions of reading were also compared to the responses of students in the Egan study and to experienced area reading teachers' definitions for level of cognitive sophistication and understanding. Models of the reading process were compared to the responses of students in the Feiman-Menser & Buchmann study, Wallhausen case study and to models defined by experienced area reading teachers for level of cognitive understanding. Students' responses on accommodating new ideal models and models of the reading process were organized into five categories and compared to the developmental classification system outlined by Belenky, Clinchy, Goldberger and Tarule in Women's Ways of Knowing (1986) based on Perry's scheme, Forms of Intellectual and Ethical Development in the College Years (1970).

CHART 5: DEFINITIONS OF READING
(n=22)

READING IS:	Beginning of Semester	Ending of Semester
• Recognizing symbols, pronouncing words	6	1
• Decoding words and letters	3	0
• Decoding and understanding words and sentences	11	4
• Process of understanding written message Comprehension of connected text	2	8
• Purposeful reconstruction of author's written message	0	9

CHART 6: MODELS OF READING PROCESS
(n=22)

THE MOST EFFECTIVE METHOD FOR TEACHING READING IS:	Beginning of Semester	Ending of Semester
• absolute truth, method materials responsible for success	10	2
• absolute truth, one method superior to others	6	5
• unsure of absolute truth, prefers one method	6	3
• combination of methods, will supplement	0	6
• no superior method, method should match child's strengths	0	6

CHART 7: ACCOMMODATING NEW MODELS
(n=22)

CATEGORIES OF WOMEN'S POSITIONS OF KNOWLEDGE (Grouped into five major epistemological categories. Based on comparison of questions 3 and 8)	Ending of Semester
1. Silence, subject to whims of external authority	6
2. Received knowledge, capable of receiving knowledge	7
3. Subjective knowledge, knowledge is personal — subjectively known	7
4. Procedural knowledge, invested in learning, applying procedures for obtaining knowledge	2
5. Constructed knowledge, knowledge is contextual, capable of creating knowledge	0

Interpretation

The data collected from students before and after the first sequence of professional education classes documenting their perceptions of the reading process, the models of the reading process available to them, and the ways in which they accommodate new models indicate that:

- Students master the basic content of reading theory and reading methodology classes more rapidly than they change their beliefs about reading theory and instructional methodology.
- The "apprenticeship of observation" described by Lortie is a powerful competing influence in pre-service teachers' experiences against which they weigh research in reading and then fall back on old models.
- Students' ability to relate research to practice is tied to their ability to think abstractly, to their level of cognitive development, and to their motivation to mediate change.
- Students' ability to change their beliefs about and perceptions of the reading process and to accommodate new models is tied to their level of cognitive development and to their motivation to mediate change.
- Students who are motivated to change their beliefs and perceptions about the reading process and accommodate new models are more apt to mediate change when they have the opportunity to observe more than one active model of instruction.
- Students provided with a "research translator" as described by Kamil (Handbook of Reading Research, p. 46) are more apt to experiment with translating reading research into practice in teaching situations.
- Students not adequately prepared to implement an unfamiliar reading strategy in a teaching situation will resist implementing new strategies and fall back on old models even if able to reflect on the incident and problem solve the difficulty.

Implications

The data imply that students' definitions of reading and their perceptions of the reading process upon entering the first sequence of professional classes in a teacher education program reflect students' personal belief systems concerning reading purposes, literature definitions, and reasons for and methods of reading instruction. The definitions students write throughout their first semester shift widely, reflecting textbook definitions and students' increased exposure to the professional literature. Value systems are rarely changed through direct instruction, however. Their beliefs at the end of the semester reflect values for reading that are similar to the values expressed at the beginning of the semester.

These implications suggest:

- Further study of the importance of the values for reading that students express on entering professional education programs. These values may be better indicators of the students' level of intellectual and ethical development when compared to Perry's scheme.
- Students should be exposed to direct and indirect instructional techniques focusing on the translation of reading research into practice in a variety of controlled instructional settings.
- Further study of Papert's hypothesis of the creation of knowledge being dependent upon available models could be applied to reading theory to assess how many different models students require to invalidate old models.
- Ideally, students' placement in field sites should be balanced for urban, rural, suburban settings and socioeconomic and ethnic diversity, but also for variety of instructional methodological modeling. Scheduling makes this a practical impossibility, although more school districts in the university service area are adopting more holistic reading programs.

Conclusions

This study focused on how teacher education students enrolled in their first professional sequence of classes in foundations of teaching reading and language arts (sic) cope with the split between theory and practice in reading as identified by James, Kamil, and Venezky. It sought to document students' models of the reading process before and after the semester and to observe how they accommodate new models of the reading process in a re-echo of Papert's hypothesis. It also compared students' perceptions of models of the reading process to the five categories of intellectual and ethical development in Women's Ways of Knowing based on Perry's scheme. It related the beliefs of twenty-two sophomore undergraduate teacher education majors enrolled in their first professional classes in reading/language arts in fall 1989 and spring 1990 to the teacher education research of Lortie and the "apprenticeship of observation."

The results of the study supported James', Kamil's, and Venezky's appraisal of the widening gap between theory and practice in reading research. While all students' definitions of reading changed across the semester to reflect the definitions in textbooks, their beliefs about how reading should be taught and what constituted a good model of the reading process varied little, supporting Lortie's findings. Students mastered the course content, but most failed to accommodate multiple models of the reading process, reflecting Perry's research on intellectual development.

It is difficult, then, to prepare students to teach reading effectively in a school district with either a whole language or phonics/basal reading focus. They express discomfort with evaluation techniques other than achievement testing. However, early multiple exposures to field experience may provide students with more than one active model of reading instructional methodology.

The result of interpreting data in this study reinforces the existence of the gap between theory and practice in reading research. It also tends to reinforce the theory that knowledge must be constructed and acted upon.

It remains for the "research translator" to investigate and define the role of active modeler for undergraduate teacher education students and graduate teachers alike.

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APPENDIX A (1)
(Start of Semester Questionnaire)

Instructor: Helen A. Wallhausen
EL262/263
Spring 1990

Name_____ Date_____

1. Define reading! What is it?

2. Why read? Or why do we teach reading?

3. What are the language arts?

4. How did you learn to read? (By what method?)

5. Historically, what have been the most popular methods for teaching reading?

6. What do you read when you have time to read?
   1.
   2.
   3.

7. Define children's literature. What is it?

8. Define a learning activity.

9. What is curriculum?

APPENDIX A (2)
(End of Semester Questionnaire)

Instructor: Helen A. Wallhausen
EL262/263
Spring 1990

Name_____ Date_____

1. Define reading! What is it?

2. Why read? Or why do we teach reading?

3. What are the language arts?

4. How did you learn to read? (By what method?)

5. Historically, what have been the most popular methods for teaching reading?

6. If you have changed your mind about teaching reading this semester,what caused the change?

7. Define children's literature. What is it?

8. What is the most effective method for teaching reading?

9. Who do you believe is the most effective reading teacher you know or have known and what makes her/him such a good model ?

APPENDIX B:
(Block II Syllabus)

Instructor: Helen A. Wallhausen
Office: SC 313D
Hours: M, W, F 11 a.m. until 1 p.m.
Phone: 335-5779 (Home)
651-2403 (Office)

EL262-02 Foundations of Reading Techniques

Text: *Improving Classroom Reading Instruction*, Second Edition. by Gerald G. Duffy & Laura R. Roehler. Random House. 1989.

Course Objectives: By the end of the semester, the student will be able to:

- describe the nature of the reading process.
- differentiate the variables affecting the reading process.
- identify the component skills and strategies involved in reading.
- evaluate various approaches and materials used to teach reading.
- demonstrate organizational and material procedures for facilitating reading instruction.
- construct a lesson plan which demonstrates knowledge of the planning process, evaluation, and the reading program.
- examine current education literature for information to be applied to reading instruction.
- evaluate learning activities for their application to the teaching of reading.

EL263-02 Foundations of Language Arts Techniques

Text: *Teaching Elementary Language Arts*, Third Edition. by Dorothy Rubin. Holt Rinehart and Winston. 1985.

Course Objectives: By the end of the semester, the student will be able to:

- identify the components of the language arts program and their interrelationships.
- differentiate the skills required in the language arts subjects.
- identify methods and programs that can be used in teaching language arts skills.
- apply teaching strategies to language arts instruction.
- demonstrate appropriate manuscript and cursive writing styles.
- construct a lesson plan which demonstrates knowledge of the planning process, evaluation, and the language arts program.
- examine current education literature for information to be applied to language arts instruction.
- evaluate learning activities for their application to the teaching of language arts.

Course Requirements:

1. Attendance at class sessions and active participation in class discussions and activities.
2. Reflective teaching -- prepare and present at least one lesson.
3. Preparation of assigned readings and lessons. Failure to submit assigned work by the due date may result in a reduction of the grade.
4. Demonstration of handwriting proficiency.
5. Notebook containing article reviews and ideas for each assigned language arts and reading subject area, journal of observations and reactions to field experience.
6. Satisfactory performance in field experience.
   a. series of one-to-one reading/language arts enrichment sessions with a student.
   b. a spelling test (whole class).
   c. a children's literature activity, including reading a book/story aloud and pre- and post-activities (small or large group).
   d. one reading lesson for small group (e.g., basal reader, readiness for reading, etc.).
   e. one general language arts lesson (small or large group).
7. Demonstrate competency in:
   a. writing and executing lesson plans.
   b. standard English usage (oral and written).
   c. manuscript and cursive writing (board and paper).
   d. phonics.
8. Adherence to the Academic Dishonesty Policy of the University as described in the catalog.

Grading:

You will receive two grades: one for Reading and one for Language Arts. In the areas listed below, you will receive points which will be assigned to either Reading or Language Arts. Point totals will be computed at the end of the semester and grades assigned. The grades will be based on percentages of the total points possible: A = 90%-100%; B = 80%-89%; C = 70%-79%; D = 60%-69%; F = less than 60%.

Examinations (5 exams)
Notebook: Journal/Readings/Idea File
Field Experiences
Handwriting Lessons
Professional Attitude

Students may earn up to 10 points extra credit with special permission from the instructor. A maximum of 15 points (extra credit and professional attitude) can be added to the overall point total.

NOTE: Students admitted to the Honors Program may take this course for honors credit by contract. Students who wish to exercise this option should see the instructor.

Examinations:

The exams will be over material covered since the previous exam. Examinations will be over both assigned readings AND class lecture and discussions.

Field Experiences:

You will write detailed lesson plans for one children's literature presentation and at least one lesson dealing with a language arts topic selected by your cooperating teacher at the site of your field experiences. You will teach at least one reading lesson to a reading group you have been following

closely during your field experience. Your evaluation for these experiences will be based upon the submitted lesson plans and the observation and evaluation by the cooperating teacher.

You will administer at least one spelling test to your assigned class. No lesson plan will be required.

As part of your Theories of Learning and Management class, but related to the Reading Techniques class, you will tutor an individual child to provide reading enrichment. These lessons will require pre-lesson planning and post-lesson evaluation. Your teacher will provide some guidance, but the lessons should consist of a variety of creative experiences planned by you to maintain student interest and allow him/her to experience success in reading. You will not be required to hand in detailed lesson plans; however, on Wednesdays an outline of your next two tutoring sessions will be handed in typed. The outlines will be numbered and dated.

The experiences described above are the required minimum lessons. In addition, discuss with your cooperating teacher other teaching experiences you could gain. These additional experiences would not require a detailed lesson plan, nor would they be evaluated for a grade; however, they would allow you to gain confidence, try new ideas, and generally learn about the teaching/learning processes. Some examples are reading to the class, checking an assignment with the whole class, presenting a new concept, discussing a story with a reading group, stimulating creative writing, etc.

Notebook:

After the second field experience of each week, write a "journal entry" describing what you saw, what you did, and your feelings and reactions to your experiences that week. These "journal entries" (including tutoring outlines) for the previous week will be handed in typed each Friday and will be worth 3 points each. The journal entries will be numbered and dated to correspond to the tutoring outlines and to match the I.T.R.s from EL261. I.T.R.s, tutoring outlines and journal entries will be clipped together as a package and submitted on Fridays. They will be graded together for consistency. When returned, they can be inserted into a section of your notebook to serve as a running record of your experience.

The demands on teachers' time are many and varied. However, much information is available in education periodicals to enable teachers to enhance their knowledge and performance. To help you develop the skills to utilize this rich resource, you will read and write a review of one article for each of the areas assigned on the attached list. Your reviews should include a synopsis of the content and your reactions to the article, and should be no longer than two typewritten pages.

In addition, compile at least two teaching ideas for each of the assigned subject areas. Select one activity for the intermediate or upper level and one for the preschool or primary level. Write a short but concise description of the activity and include diagrams or illustrations if appropriate. These are NOT to be copied verbatim from the source but are to be a synthesis. Identify the subject area and grade level. After your ideas have been evaluated, you will duplicate them for members of the class to add to their notebooks.

All assignments should be done on 8-1/2x11-inch pages which will be placed in a 3-ring notebook after I have graded them. At the end of the semester, I will collect your notebooks containing journal entries, article reviews, and ideas, and overall grades will be computed. Include the source from which you took the article or ideas, with complete bibliographical references. The article reviews will be worth 10 points each, ideas 3 points each. Overall grades (one for Reading and one for Language Arts) for your notebook will be assigned, and will be based on the form and content of the reviews and the usefulness, clarity of directions, and form of teaching ideas. These grades will be a total of the points received over the course of the semester.

Handwriting:

Teachers are expected not only to teach handwriting, but also to be a good model for children. In this class, you will be shown several standard styles of manuscript and cursive writing. You may select one of them to follow, but you must do both manuscript and cursive from the one you select. Three proficiency tests will be given during the semester, two on paper and one on the chalkboard. Evaluation will be based upon the quality of handwriting as compared to standardized models. You will be expected to complete the handwriting samples with minimal erasure or smears. Each test is worth 5 points, with the highest score from the paper/pencil test added to the chalkboard score for a total of 10 points. (See Rubin for the grading criteria.)

Professional Attitude:

Students are expected to behave in a professional manner in class and during class activities. Your professionalism will be evaluated by your general behavior, i.e., attentiveness, participation in class discussion, respect for others, punctuality in attendance as well as the turning in of assignments, ability to follow assigned procedures, cooperation, etc. Points will be added to or subtracted from your overall total as follows:

Perfect attendance	+5
Participation in class discussion(s)	+5
Late assignments	- 5 (each)
Each absence beyond 2	- 3
"No show" for field experience	-10 (each)

The instructor reserves the right to add or subtract additional points for the kinds of behavior described in the paragraph above.

Reflective Teaching: (not graded but required)

This form of peer teaching provides practice with feedback. Several designated teachers teach toward the same learning objective simultaneously (all will be given the same instructional objective). Since there is a common experience, all members of the class can compare and contrast teaching methodologies and their results.

The purpose of this activity is to provide opportunity to learn to teach by teaching. You will have an opportunity to consider why you were successful or unsuccessful, and to reflect upon and analyze the teaching event.